



# NEWS

## United States Consulate General

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ELECTRONIC SYSTEM FOR TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION (ESTA)** **ADVISORY STATEMENT**

Beginning January 12, 2009, all nationals and citizens of Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries will be required by law to obtain a travel authorization prior to initiating travel to the United States under the VWP. This authorization may be obtained online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA™), a free Internet application administered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through a U.S. government Web site.

DHS does not charge VWP travelers a fee for completion of an ESTA™ application. Eligible visitors seeking to travel to the United States under the VWP may apply for travel authorization via the ESTA™ Web site at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>.

VWP travelers should be aware that unauthorized third-parties have established Web sites, which charge visitors seeking to travel to the United States under the VWP, for information about ESTA™ and for submitting ESTA™ applications to DHS on behalf of the traveler. These businesses and Web sites are not endorsed by, associated with, or affiliated in any way with DHS or the United States Government. Again, the United States Government does not charge a fee to obtain information about, apply for, or obtain a travel authorization through the ESTA™ Web site. Use of a private service to apply for travel authorization via ESTA™ will not expedite the granting of approval.

The ESTA™ application Web site is available in 16 languages and includes a help section that provides additional information for VWP travelers to guide them through the application process. Additional information about ESTA™ may be found at <http://www.cbp.gov/esta>.

Each approved ESTA application will be valid for a period of two years, so that a visitor could travel to the United States repeatedly within a two-year period without obtaining another ESTA. Travelers whose ESTA applications are approved, but whose passports will expire in less than two years, will receive an ESTA valid until the passport's expiration date.

Visitors will need to apply for a new ESTA if their name changes, if they are issued a new passport, or if any of the answers they previously provided to the ESTA application eligibility questions should change during that two-year validity period. DHS is designing ESTA to

accommodate last-minute and emergency travel. DHS recommends, however, that travelers obtain an ESTA at the time of reservation or ticket purchase, or at least 72 hours before departure to the United States.

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<http://curacao.usconsulate.gov>